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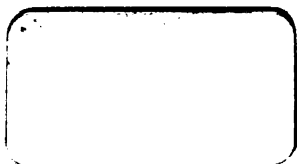
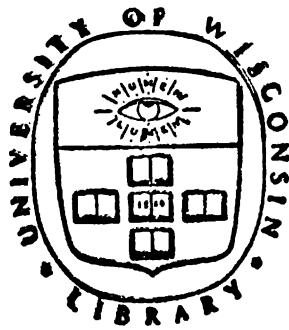
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CERTAIN ASPECTS OF ORGANIZED RECREATIONS

IN THE UNITED STATES

FROM

1876 to 1889

BY

GLADYS MILLER

A THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

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Introduction.

This paper aims to present some phases of American amusements between the years 1876 and 1889. The construction of this study was based upon a preliminary survey of the June and December issues of the leading newspapers of the United States to determine what the important amusements were. Through this survey the important sports were determined, and there followed a detailed examination of all the material available which touched upon the points in question.

The thirteen years embraced in this period saw the evolution of the modern sporting page. From obscure, occasional notices, sporting came to occupy one of the foremost places in the press. During the summer of 1886 the New York Tribune was compelled to devote more than five hundred columns to open-air sports in America, assigning to the collection and presentation of this material many of the best writers and observers in its service. This was true of other newspapers as well and indicates the place athletic amusements were assuming in the United States. Every newspaper which was in accord with the times began to assign an important place to out-door amusements.¹ From the prominence of athletics in the press it does not follow necessarily that sports had achieved a wholly new and unprecedented popularity with the public, but

1. The Tribune Book of Open-Air Sports, edited by Henry Hall (New York, 1887), Introduction.

other significant facts coupled with this, seem to substantiate^{2.} this evidence. In 1876 there was formed the first distinctly national professional baseball organization in America, while in 1880 the League of American Wheelmen was also formed. In 1881 the National Lawn Tennis Association came into being, and in 1884 the first roller-skate manual was published, a significant fact. Significant, because it showed that the public read such literature, otherwise it never would have been published. No American pugilist had ever gained the same following or been the subject of such attention as John L. Sullivan, who has his rise and attained his highest degree of efficiency in the eighties.

The two major subjects of this paper deal with baseball and bicycling respectively. The choice was made because the one represents the most popular, far-reaching spectators sport in America within the period, the other held a similar place as a participants amusement. Reported baseball was almost wholly professional in character. The professional element in this game was, indeed, greater than that in any of the other sports of the period. Each year there grew up a more highly organized commercial system with a few trained players entertaining thousands of spectators throughout the country. By 1887 the high-wheeled, hard-tired type of bicycle had reached the height of its perfection and popularity, and it was not until the early nineties that the pneumatic tires came into revolutionize the bicycle industry and finally to place it on a sound commercial basis.^{3.}

3. Census, Special Reports of Manufacturies. Selected

Industries.. Part IV. 1905 (Washington, 1908), page 289.

The last two chapters of this study are devoted to minor sports. For want of a better name they have been called, "Minor Participants Sports" and "Minor Spectators Sports". Spectators Sports were thoroughly reported through the newspapers because they formed a part of the daily news. Participants Sports were not regularly reported, and in the case of roller-skating in particular, the dearth of material is marked.

Any force which tends to interest and influence the public at large becomes a part of the history of that public. Organized recreation, as such a force, came into existence between 1876 and 1889. In one form or another athletic sports became a part of the life of the average citizen of the United States, so that a proper understanding of the period involves a knowledge of this important innovation. This paper is not a history of athletics, but rather a study of some phases of organized recreations which reached and changed the lives of the people in the United States, and thus became a part of the history of the period.

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Chapter I.

Baseball.

The first scheme for playing baseball, according to the most trustworthy evidence obtainable, was devised by Abner Doubleday in 1839 at Cooperstown, New York.¹ In the college, however, the game figured as one of the field sports even earlier. Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes in an interview with a Boston newspaper reporter, declared this to be a fact, and he graduated from Harvard in 1839.² Baseball was not born, but, like Topsy, "just grewed."³ As early as 1842 the Knickerbockers of New York, a club formed purely for congeniality, and strictly amateur in character, met for practice, but by 1845 the desirability of effecting a formal organization was first realized.⁴ Thus the first regularly organized baseball club in the world, on record, proposed by Alexander T. Cartwright and carried to completion by him and a committee, became the nucleus of the famous Knickerbocker Baseball Club of New York.⁵

1. Albert G. Spalding, America's National Game (New York, 1911), page 19.

2. Spalding, page 42.

3. W. T. Harris, Baseball in Athletic Sports in America, England, Australia (New York, N. D.), page 25.

4. Spalding, pages 49-50, Athletic Sports in America, page 25.

5. Spalding, page 52.

In 1857 twenty-five clubs representing various parts of the United States sent delegates to New York, and here formed the National Association of Base-Ball Players. It was then that baseball took its place formally as a recognized sport in America. This Association met once a year, a committee revising the rules when necessary. During the Civil War, although the Association kept intact, the game itself languished, but between the years 1865 and 1870 Amateur baseball spread and flourished. ⁶. In the meantime professional baseball had made itself felt, and by 1868 the National Association was forced to recognize this fact. The last useful convention of the National Association met in 1870, while by 1871 a professional league was organized which lasted for five years. ⁷.

In 1876 came the organization of the National League of Professional Base-Ball Clubs, a name evolved by W. A. Hulbert and A. G. Spalding.⁸. The constitution of the new league was formulated by these same men, and its doctrines, with a few changes, have stood the test of growth and time until the present day. ⁹. The purpose of the new

6. Athletic Sports in America, page 26.

7. Athletic Sports in America, page 28.

8. New York World, Feb. 5, 1876.

9. Spalding, page 209; Athletic Sports in America, page 59.

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organization, as outlined, aimed to "enact and enforce proper rules for the exhibition and conduct of the game, and to make base-ball playing respectable and honorable", "to protect and promote the mutual interests of professional base-ball clubs and professional base-ball players", and to "establish and regulate the base-ball championship of the United States".¹⁰ In December, 1875 Charles A. Fowle of St. Louis, John A. Joyce of Cincinnati, William Haldeman, Thomas Sherley, and Charles E. Chase of Louisville, met Mr. Hulbert and Mr. A. G. Spalding at St. Louis and decided to break from the National Association. After communicating with the eastern clubs, the National League of Professional Base-Ball Clubs was regularly organized on February 2, 1876.¹¹ Mr. Bulkeley, afterwards Governor of Vermont, was elected President, and N. E. Young became Secretary at a salary of four hundred dollars a year. Among other things, provision was made to raise the entrance fee from ten to one hundred dollars, the organization became, as the title signifies, a league of clubs rather than a league of players, no city with a population under seventy-five thousand inhabitants could join the league, and no club from any city less than five miles from any city then a member could be annexed. This latter provision vested

10. Athletic Sports in America, page 60.

11. New York World, February 5, 1876.

7.
proprietary territorial rights in each of the league clubs. The first step toward the "Reserve Rule" was taken when a players contract was also adopted. Any player guilty of breaking his contract or of dishonesty was to be expelled and forever debarred from membership in any of the league clubs. Gambling and liquor selling on the grounds were abolished, and players were made subject to expulsion for any interest in a bet or in the purchase of pool tickets.¹² Each club was required to play ten games with each other club within the league during the season or forfeit membership to the league.¹³ The cities represented in the first year were: Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati, Hartford, Louisville, New York, Philadelphia, and St. Louis.¹⁴

The first annual meeting of the National League was held in December, 1876.¹⁵ Here the Secretary's salary was increased to five hundred dollars a year.¹⁶

12. Athletic Sports in America, page 63.

13. Athletic Sports in America, page 65.

14. Chicago Tribune, Sept. 9-16, 1876.

15. Spalding, page 222.

16. Athletic Sports in America, page 66.

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The end of the season saw honors evenly divided between the east and the west with the teams standing in the following order:

1. Chicago
2. Hartford
3. St. Louis
4. Boston
5. Louisville
6. New York
7. Philadelphia
8. Cincinnati.^{17.}

The season of 1877 was one of the darkest in the history of the game.^{18.} Progress was slow in the game, few new clubs were organized, and most of the professional ventures were attended by financial failures, practically all of the league clubs losing money. By 1878 confidence had returned and throughout the country an unexpected increase in the number of clubs organized, together with unusual interest and approval on the part of the press, and the revived activity of the turnstiles, made a successful season assured. The use of the "lively ball" was in part accountable for this success.^{19.} The "lively ball", that was, one with so much rubber in it that it bounded too easily, was replaced by the "dead ball", which contained no elasticity whatever.^{20.} At the beginning of the eighties, a

17. Spalding, page 221.

18. Athletic Sports in America, page 66.

19. Spalding, Pages 222-223.

20. Spalding, pages 223-224.

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model ball, similar to that in use today, was introduced, and shortly after, the league adopted an "Official League Ball" made according to specifications and furnished under long term contracts. ²¹.

The most sensational event between the League organization and 1880 was the expulsion of four men from the Louisville team for crookedness. In 1878 Nolan of Indianapolis was dismissed for dissention.²².

Each year saw the personnel of the league changed somewhat. At the Annual Meeting in 1877 St. Louis resigned, while Cincinnati was reinstated, and Indianapolis, Milwaukee, and Providence were admitted to membership.²³. In Cleveland in 1878 at the Annual Meeting, Indianapolis resigned, while Cleveland, Buffalo, and Syracuse were added. Milwaukee's place was taken by Troy City. It was also decided that twenty umpires should be appointed by the league, from which number, clubs might select as each saw fit.²⁴.

21. Spalding, page 225.

22. Spalding, pages 126-227; Athletic Sports in America, page 69.

23. Athletic Sports in America, page 77.

24. Athletic Sports in America, page 79.

The year 1879 was a noteworthy one in the history of baseball. It marked the adoption of the "Reserve" rule, "which has been the pillar of professional baseball" ever since. By this agreement each club could reserve five men by signed agreement for the season of 1880.²⁵ At a special Meeting held February 26, 1880, a provision was made against drunkenness among players during the season, and an additional clause provided, that no players could be signed before October 23, 1880.²⁶

In the meantime numberless clubs, semi-professional and purely amateur in character, had been organized. Many disbanded during the first year only to be replaced by more thriving organizations. Every city and village boasted of at least one team of some kind, most of which avowed allegiance to the National League and adopted their rules. In 1879 was organized the first exclusively western minor league consisting of Davenport and Dubuque, Iowa, Rockford, Illinois, and Omaha, Nebraska. Unattached clubs derived much of their revenue from exhibition games with National league teams, which would sign away their best players while in their cities. Naturally an outcry against this practice resulted, and steps were soon taken by the National league to remedy this evil.²⁷

25. Chicago Inter Ocean, Sept. 1879.

26. Athletic Sports in America, page 84.

27. Spalding, page 230.

The system providing for season schedules was not inaugurated until 1877. Previous to this time there were no regularly scheduled series, but arrangement for games was made through local Secretaries of each Club. 28.

Between the years 1875 and 1880 only ten or eleven men were carried on trips. When illness occurred among the players, the ranks were filled from disengaged or surplus professionals in the city in which the game was played.²⁹

The decade of the eighties began and continued an era of multiplied clubs everywhere, and the year 1882 saw an organization formed whose avowed purpose was to rival the National League and known as the American Base-Ball Association. An appeal was made to the public by charging twenty-five cents admission to games rather than fifty cents, as the National League had done. Unrestricted Sunday games and wide open traffic liquor laws "could not but be prejudicial." 30. The National League did not waver, however. The fifty cent price was retained, the players disciplined, the liquor law enforced on the grounds, and no games were played on Sunday. The new Association numbered among its members, Baltimore, Cincinnati, Louisville, Philadelphia, Pittsburg, and St. Louis. 31.

28. Spalding, page 230.

29. Spalding, page 234.

30. Chicago Tribune, November 2, 1881.

31. Chicago Tribune, November 3, 1881.

The year 1883 saw a big boom in the attendance at ball games. Nearly all the clubs made money as a result. 32.

On March 17, 1883 the arbitration committees of the two major leagues met in New York City, and a document, then called the Tri partite agreement, now known as the National Agreement, was drawn up. 33. This National Agreement stood as drawn up by A. G. Mills, President of the National League until 1890, with the exception of a few amendments. The agreement provided that no player could bind himself to any one club for a longer period than the seven months between April 1st and October 31st, and that no contract for the following year could be made before October 30th, and then only with the consent of the club the player was already with. If this rule was violated the player was disqualified for a year and the club he had signed with was fined five hundred dollars. If a player was disqualified for any reason, due notice must be given to the Board of Arbitration, which was duly provided for. By October 10th the secretary of each club must send to the secretary of every other club his reserve list of not more than fourteen men and his list of eligibles. 34.

At the annual meeting of the National League in 1883 the number of games constituting a series was increased from twelve to fourteen. 35. The season of 1883 was an exciting and profitable one for the league, 36. but 1886 marked the most

32. Athletic Sports in America, pages 89-90.

33. Chicago Tribune, September 30, 1883.

34. Spalding, pp 244-245. For the agreement in full see this ref.

35. Athletic Sports in America, page 95.

36. Chicago Tribune, Oct. 1, 1883.

13.
successful season in baseball. Over three thousand championship games were played during the season by various clubs.³⁷

By 1887 professional baseball was a highly successful commercialized system handling large sums of money each season. This same year M. J. Kelly was released to Boston by Chicago for ten thousand dollars in cash, and Kelly's salary was nearly doubled by Boston. The salary list of the Boston team of fourteen men in 1889 was forty thousand dollars, while that of the New York team of sixteen men was forty-five thousand dollars.

In 1888 the attendance at ball games was the largest which had been known.³⁸ Six games between New York and Boston near the close of the season in 1889, show a total attendance of sixty-three thousand six hundred forty-nine. Three of the games played in Boston drew thirty-one thousand seven hundred seven, while the three concluding games of the series played in New York had thirty-one thousand eight hundred eighty-two people in attendance. It was estimated that at least sixteen thousand people witnessed the last game, with fourteen thousand three hundred sixty-four within the gates, paying from fifty cents to a dollar admission, while the rest saw the game from the trees.³⁹

37. Athletic Sports in America, page 106.

38. Athletic Sports in America, page 38, page 114.

39. Athletic Sports in America, page 24.

Over twenty-five thousand people witnessed the game between New York and Detroit at the New York Polo grounds on Decoration Day 1886, and this near the beginning of the season, too. Fifteen thousand people were attracted in 1880 to a game between New York and Chicago and twenty-two thousand fans saw Brooklyn play St. Louis on Decoration Day at Brooklyn.⁴⁰ The contest for the championship pennant during the season of 1885 between the National League and the American Association attracted hundreds of thousands of spectators. Four games between Chicago and New York in Chicago were eagerly watched by forty-thousand people at the Chicago Club grounds. The receipts were nearly twenty-five thousand dollars. Spectators were attracted to the grounds solely for the excitement of the game.⁴¹

Pool selling had been prominent in the old days, but with the formation of the National League a decided stand had been taken against any such practice. The League after a bitter fight, came out victorious and always stood for clean, honest methods in professional ball. In spite of the gambling aspect baseball flourished and attracted larger crowds than any other sport in America.⁴²

40. Athletic Sports in America, page 24.

41. Annual Encyclopaedia, New Series, Baseball (New York, 1886), X, page 83.

42. Annual Encyclopaedia, X, page 83.

Baseball was advancing with rapid strides and in the winter of 1888 and 1889 the Professional National League of Baseball Players made a world tour of marked importance in the spread and influence of the game. ⁴³. The party was made up of the Chicago team and of an opposing team picked from other clubs of the National League. They left Chicago in October, 1888 and enroute played at all the important towns, enjoying splendid ovations everywhere.⁴⁴. After visiting all of the principal cities of Europe, Australia, and the Pacific Islands, even giving an exhibition game in the shadow of the sphinx, they returned to America, having entertained an estimated total in Great Britain alone of sixty thousand people. ⁴⁵. Although the entire cost of the expedition was fifty thousand dollars the receipts were ample to pay all expenses. ⁴⁶.

The best amateur clubs were the college organizations, the most noteworthy being those of Harvard, Yale, and Princeton. Yale had the finest nine for several years. ⁴⁷. The college

43. Spalding, page 251; Chicago InterOcean, Oct. 23, 1888.

44. Athletic Sports in America, pages 252-253.

45. Spalding, pages 257-260.

46. Spalding, page 264.

47. Outing IX, page 407, Annual Encyclopedia, X, page 83.

league was known as the American College Base-ball Association. The first recorded game (inter-collegiate) took place in 1859 between Amherst and Williams and the players were chosen by ballot.⁴⁸ The final game nearly always took place between Princeton and Yale on the Polo grounds at New York and was always witnessed by from twenty to twenty-five thousand people. The colleges also played against professionals.⁴⁹

The first issue of Spalding's Base-Ball Guide came out in 1877, and it has appeared regularly since. It contains a history of the game, a history of the past season, the standings of the clubs, the batting averages of players, in fact, all material interesting to a baseball fan. All the material is compiled from official records and hence is reliable.

The first World's Series games were played in 1884 a year after the organization of the second major league, the American Base-Ball Association. There were three games between Providence and New York. Providence won all three. ⁵¹.

48. Outing, XI, page 408.

49. Athletic Sports in America, page 270.

50. Spalding's Official Baseball Guide (Chicago, 1877).

51. New York Herald, October 24, 25 and 26, 1884.

September is the month in which baseball reaches its highest pitch of excitement, and in running through the September issues of some of the more prominent daily papers from 1876-1889, certain facts become evident. Perhaps the most striking thing is the growth of interest in the game as evidenced by the growth in the amount of space and attention devoted to baseball. In 1876 with no regularity, perhaps two or three times a week, some league game that is to take place may be mentioned. This record, however, is usually so securely tucked away that the casual observer would fail to note its presence.⁵² On September 17, 1877 the New York Herald for the first time published a prepared championship table, giving the standings of the various clubs within the league, and one week later a similar table was given. The daily notices were still obscure and occasional.⁵³ The only case within the period where baseball occupied a position on the front page was in the Boston Daily Advertiser for 1877. Here every Monday throughout September the local game, other league games, and the standings of the clubs were noted, while the Chicago Inter Ocean for the same year followed the same scheme, being the first paper to note the record of the teams as early as September first. Both these papers also comment on the games played and note the games still to be played.⁵⁴ By 1881 the New York World

52. New York Tribune, September, 1876.

53. New York Herald, September, 1877.

54. Boston Daily Advertiser, September, 1879.

Chicago Inter Ocean, September, 1879.

was publishing the standings of the clubs weekly and in addition scheduling games to be played. A record of the first three weeks play in September, the noting of local games, and brief resumes of the battery work of the club teams, in addition, showed a tendency to enlarge the scope of the sporting field in the press.⁵⁵ Not until 1885 was there any evidence of a distinct sporting page. By this time most of the leading papers devoted one page or part of a page, somewhere in their issues, to a weekly record of the standings of the teams in the National League and any other baseball material at hand.⁵⁶ The first evidence of a modern baseball sheet was contained in the 1887 issues of the Chicago Tribune, which published records of the modern type for both leagues, notes on baseball and "Around the Bases", amusing incidents or items of interest connected with baseball.⁵⁷ By 1889 the sporting sheet was a well defined part of the newspaper, with all sporting material concentrated into a given space and with every evidence of

55. New York World, September, 1881.

56. New York Herald; New York Tribune, Cincinnati Commercial; Chicago Tribune, September, 1885.

57. Chicago Tribune, September, 1887.

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being the result of special work by special writers. The New York Herald for that year was only typical of other big newspapers and within its sporting page for September were contained club batting averages, club fielding averages, and individual batting and fielding standings. In addition a big chart showing in a heavy black line New York's standing in the league throughout the season with reference to the other clubs brought before the public a graphic, daily impression of the work of its local team. 58.

Besides the growth in space and attention to baseball through the press, increasing public interest and approval in the game may be sensed through notices from time to time in the papers. The growth in attendance at games, which is one outlet for public enthusiasm can be seen in the following games picked at random from the papers.

58. New York Herald, September, 1889.

September 7, 1876, 500 persons, St. Louis vs. New York.^{59.}

September 3, 1884, 1500 persons, New York vs. Chicago. ^{60.}

September 4, 1887, 10,000 persons, Philadelphia vs. Chicago. ^{61.}

September 3, 1888, 10,000 persons, Cincinnati vs. Brooklyn. ^{62.}

Brooklyn always seemed to be a strong baseball town. By 1889 she rivaled New York and Boston, her Sunday crowds being simply enormous. "When one considers the inconvenience the traveler experiences in reaching this out of the way place," said the New York Tribune, "one can understand what a person will put up with in order to see a base-ball match".^{63.} Brooklyn had the largest number of amateur clubs owing to the fine grounds provided for them by the city. Here, in summer a dozen matches might be seen any day.^{64.}

The great National game of the American people was distinctly and almost exclusively the game of baseball. ^{65.} By

59. New York Tribune, September 7, 1876.

60. New York Tribune, Sept. 3, 1884.

61. New York Tribune, September 4, 1887.

62. New York Tribune, September 3, 1888.

63. New York Tribune, June 23, 1889.

64. A new Book of Sports, Reprinted from the Saturday Review (London, 1885), page 270.

65. New Book of Sports, page 23.

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1885 professional playing in the United States was extensive. Every prominent city had its club, some two. In round numbers four hundred men were earning their living by this popular game. A good pitcher, according to an English visitor's account, got six hundred pounds a year, catchers, basemen, and shortstops four hundred pounds, and fielders from two hundred forty to four hundred pounds. Amateur clubs were practically innumerable. Every village of three thousand inhabitants had at least one team, more frequently two, the skill of these ranging from the worst to the equal of professionals. Every boy, from the time he could hold a ball, played baseball.⁶⁶ The visitor to the United States in the summertime would surely be tempted to paraphrase and exclaim, 'Good Heavens! even the little children play baseball!' The enormous popularity of the game could only be comprehended when the observer realized that any championship game or deciding contest of a college championship would draw out twenty-thousand people, who knew the game, for there was no gambling or pool - selling.⁶⁷ Every boy grew up with it, and it as truly formed a part of his existence as of that of the small boy of today.⁶⁸ The true American had very little heart for anything save baseball; even in football he preserved the baseball attitude of mind.⁶⁹

66. New Book of Sports, pages 268-269.

67. New Book of Sports, page 259.

68. New Book of Sports, page 260.

69. New Book of Sports, page 259.

To quote two of the magazines for the period on the National game, "The democracy of the sport (base-ball) could not be better illustrated than in this Polo ground multitude (New York), or its counter part in any of the other cities where the league contests are waged. All creeds, castes, and professions are telescoped together in the grand stand, and representatives of the exclusive four hundred are separated from those of the unselect millions only by a fragile rail. Nobody is too dignified to groan and howl at unsatisfactory decisions of the umpire, or too partial to withhold frantic applause for a home-run, no matter to whose score it is added."

"To keep track of these stupendous baseball events, and occasionally to be an eye-witness of one of them, is the absorbing ambition of the city gamin's life. He hangs wistfully, almost fiercely, about the gates of the charmed enclosure, repeating his 'Mister, take a feller in?' to every promising-looking comer. This hope failing, he locates an eligible knot-hole in a board fence, or "shins" up a tall telegraph pole, from which coigne of vantage he triumphantly yells down bulletins of the game to his less enterprising comrades on the ground." These same points that the small boy so eagerly watched were flashed downtown, and the next morning were scanned with equal eagerness in the form of sensationallly headed newspaper reports read at half the breakfast tables in the land. "We may be without a national poem or novel, or a distinctly American School of Art, but clearly we have a National game." 70. To quote again: "Long live the National

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game! Of all the games and field sports that have been introduced into civilized countries from time immemorial, not one, so far as history has kept account, has ever awakened the same enthusiasm, attracted the same following or enjoyed such steady progress along the highway of public favor as the National Game of America. The average American boy, although he may be rather ignorant as to how delegates are elected to the National Convention, the number of electoral votes apportioned to different states of the union, or the date of Lee's surrender, can call the names of eminent professional players off hand." Baseball involved the exchange and investment of thousands of dollars annually, occupied thousands of columns in the great daily newspapers and magazines of the country, and received the support of business man, mechanic, clerk and capitalist alike.⁷¹

Why did baseball attain such a hold on the American public? Because, in the words of Governor Hill of New York, "Baseball, like the average American, has more dash, enterprise, more vim, more 'git-up - en-git' to it in a minute than anything else of its kind that any other nation ever attained in a lifetime." That, perhaps, was the secret of the National game's success in the United States. ⁷².

71. Outing, IX, page 350.

72. Outing, IX, page 351.

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Chapter II.

Bicycling.

In 1818 the Draisine was introduced into England and a year later the "dandy horse" or "hobby horse" type came to New York, where people took kindly to it, riding it on the bowery and through the parks.¹ Little or no improvement was made in this machine until Lallemont, a Frenchman, hung cranks to the front axle of a modified form of the "hobby horse", thus making it possible to propel the machine entirely by the feet and steer it with the hands. This machine was the original "bone shaker" and was exhibited in Paris in 1865, where it attracted very little attention. The next year (1866) Lallemont came to America and with Carroll took out the first complete patent ever obtained for a machine of this type. This two-wheeled velocipede was popular in America, reaching its height in 1869 or 1870, and makers had all they could do to supply the demand.² About 1870 the furor culminated and two years later the "bone shaker", as it was popularly called, was a thing of the past.

The "bone shaker", the parent of the modern bicycle, had two wheels of nearly equal size made of wood with iron tires and with the saddle midway between the wheels. An Englishman, enlarged the front wheel, placed the saddle more directly over it, and decreased the size of the rear wheel proportionately.

1. A. A. Pope, The Bicycle Industry in C. M. Depew's One

Hundred Years of American Commerce (New York, 1895), p. 549.

2. Pope, Bicycle Industry I, pages 549-550.

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An American, C. K. Bradford, suggested the rubber tires. All these improvements were made in 1868,³. During the Franco-Prussian war there was a slow but steady growth and interest in cycles in the United States. The United States patent offices show that our inventors were earnestly endeavoring to solve the problems attending the perfection of the machines. Meanwhile the use of wood gradually disappeared, giving place to wire spokes, steel hubs and felloes, and tubular backbones, handle-bars and forks. The round contractile rubber tire, too, came to be used in place of steel and added materially to the ease and comfort of riding.⁴.

At the Centennial Exposition at Philadelphia in 1876, the first bicycles seen in America were exhibited. These were of English make. During that same year David Stanton, at that time England's bicycle champion, gave several exhibitions of riding in halls throughout the country.⁵. Now men who had enjoyed the somewhat doubtful pleasure of the old "bone shaker" early became devotees of the bicycle .

3. Appleton's Encyclopedia (New Series) Bicycling (New York, 1885), IX, page 88; Pope, Bicycling Industry, Page 550.

4. Annual Encyclopedia, Bicycling, IX, page 83.

5. Pope, Bicycling Industry, I, Page 550; The Wheelman (Boston, 1883), I, page 115.

By 1877 the sport had become more or less popular in England, and in that year Mr. Pope, a member of the Pope Manufacturing Company, had constructed, under the supervision of an English guest in his house, a wheel, which was completed in August, after three months of work. This wheel cost the extravagant sum of three hundred thirteen dollars and was made entirely by hand. The Pope manufacturing Company had already been established, and Mr. Pope then took active steps toward introducing wheels into America. In September 1877 a small order for bicycles was sent to England and received late in the same year.⁶ In 1878 the first American Company was organized for their manufacture. By 1884 there were a half dozen manufacturies, twice as many importers, and hundreds of dealers in all parts of the country. Each year saw an increase in the number of machines sold, and the estimated output for 1884 was six thousand, while the number in use then was not far from thirty-thousand, exclusive of boys' machines.⁷ The bicycle was a vehicle having two wheels in the same plane, connected by a backbone or perch, the forewheel being about three times in diameter that of the rear wheel. The perch supported a

6. Pope, Bicycling Industry, I, page 550.

7. Annual Encyclopedia, IX, page 83.

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step to mount by and a saddle and spring for the rider. The machine was elastic enough to prevent the dangerous shake incident to a rigid machine. The tires were of rubber, solid, and of various qualities, varying in thickness from one inch for the heaviest roadster to about three-eighths of an inch for the lightest racer.

There were several varieties of machines popularly known as bicycles. The best known types were the Kangaroo and the 'Xtraordinary. The former had cogged wheels with cranks attached, connected by means of an endless chain to similar smaller wheels at the bearings, while the latter type had a driving apparatus consisting of short arms working on universal joints at the sides of the fork, to which were joined bent levers, these being fastened at about their centers to the cranks. As originally constructed the bicycle contained nearly three hundred pieces.

One distinctly American feature of the bicycle was the interchangeability of the parts, all being made by machinery, and constructed as nearly as possible with absolute accuracy. Each year saw changes made looking toward perfection in the bicycle, but until the advent of the safety, the essentials, described above, remained practically the same. 8.

8. Annual Encyclopedia, 1884, pages 80-83. For more detailed description of the parts making up the bicycle, see the above reference.

The League of American Wheelmen was an Association of bicyole and tricycle riders and riders of other velocipedes in the United States and Canada, organized at Newport, Rhode Island, May 31, 1880 and having for its purpose, "to promote the general interests of bicycling and tricycling; to ascertain, defend and protect the rights of wheelmen, and to encourage and facilitate touring." Membership was open to all amateur wheelmen of good standing (including ladies).⁹.

The management of the league was vested in a National Assembly consisting of all the officers of the organization, and including representatives from all the subdivisions within the states. This National assembly made the by-laws for the guidance of the league and generally directed and decided in all matters not provided for directly by the constitution. General supervision and executive power was vested in the executive and finance committees. The State organizations bore much the same relation to the National assembly that our own states bear to our National Government. 10.

9. Annual Encyclopedia, IX, page 84.

10. The Illustrated Buffalo Express, April 7, 1895.

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At all places of importance, consuls were located who collected information about the condition of the roads. In this way a vast amount of knowledge of the roads of the country was collected, a subject about which, heretofore, comparatively little had been known. The great drawback to bicycling was the poor condition of the roads, and the great body of cyclers necessarily was confined to the large cities, where the streets were better, or to the naturally good country roads.¹¹ The inspection and agitation for good roads was coincident and started with early bicycle experiences on suburban roads. At the first meeting of the American Wheelmen a decided stand was taken on this subject and the advisability of an organization working unitedly for this reform was urged. Every wheelman became an earnest advocate of good roads, and much of the success attained was due to his hearty co-operation and support.¹² Of all inventions of the period, the bicycle was justly termed the perfect road tester. Every rider, within a month after he had learned to ride, became ardently convinced of the necessity for improved roads.¹³ The league expended many thousands of

11. Annual Encyclopedea, IX, page 83.

12. Pope, Bicycling Industry, I, page 552.

13. Wheelman, I, page 41.

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dollars each year in the publication of various pamphlets, and^{30.} the magazine "Good Roads", and in other ways endeavored to awaken interest in the improvement of highways. At the Carriage Builders National Association, the chairman of the highway improvement said, "Perhaps the most effective, certainly the most systematic work done so far has been that of the League of American Wheelmen, consisting of active, young and middle aged men, well organized into a National body with state divisions, and it is to no small extent due to them that this matter of roads has received the unqualified public endorsement of very many of the most prominent men in the country, that it has had the attention of 10 or 12 of our State Governors in their annual messages and that in nearly as many States bills have been presented intended to provide practical reforms and remedies."

Road Commissioner Burroughs of New York in his first annual message compliments the work of the League of American Wheelmen. 14. Leslie's Weekly in an editorial for October 5, 1889 says that "if the increasing use of bicycles in American cities will bring about an effective public opinion in favor of asphalt pavements"--- "then its mission will have been a grand one." 15. This and similar sentiments, perhaps

14. Buf. Exp., April 7, 1895.

15. Leslie's Weekly, October 5, 1889, LXVII, page 160.

are significant, because they show that the public was conscious of bad conditions and looked rather naturally to the wheelmen to bring about the necessary reform.

"Outing and the Wheelman" was an eighty page illustrated monthly magazine devoted to outdoor, positive, amateur recreations, including Bicycling and Tricycling, to which it gave a leading place. In 1885 it became known simply as "Outing", although it still assigned much space to wheeling. Besides this there were the "Bicycle World", successor to the "American Bicycle Journal", established in 1877, the "Wheel", the "Western Cyclist", and the "Amateur Athlete" which was the official organ of the league of American Wheelmen. There were several other wheel publications, as well.¹⁶.

The Cyclists Touring Club was an international organization, whose members were found in nearly every country of Europe, Australia, and America. In the latter it had a large and increasing membership. The headquarters of this league were in England.¹⁷.

The first meet noteworthy of a name, bringing together wheelmen from all parts of the country, was held upon Walnut Avenue, Boston, Massachusetts, on the morning of September 11, 1879 for the "Wheel around the Hub". This

16. Annual Encyclopedia, IX, page 84.

17. Annual Encyclopedia, IX, page 84.

excursion was a ~~two~~ days ride and was conceived, planned and carried out successfully by Charles E. Pratt. This probably did more to give an impulse to bicycling in America than any other event in its history. The forty men who made up that party have always been looked upon as pioneers in bicycling in the United States. 18.

The next gathering of Wheelmen was the "Great Meet" called May 31, 1880, at Newport, Rhode Island, largely through the influence of the New York Club. These annual meetings usually consisted of a parade, a race for the league championship, a business meeting, and a banquet.¹⁹ Previous to the parade in Newport a Meeting was held in the skating rink, and there was formed the League of American Wheelman, of which Mr. Pratt was elected President. This formation rendered annual meets certain as long as the league existed.

On May 30, 1881 the Wheelmen met in Boston,²⁰ and the next meet went to Chicago in 1882, the Boston delegation in a Wagner Sleeper, bearing the legend, "Private car. Boston Bicycle Club. To the Chicago Meet." And just in the degree in which the rest of the passengers were up-to-date would they instinctively murmur, "baseball", "Oscar Wilde", or "Bicyoler"²¹.

18. Wheelmen I, 115.

19. Annual Encyclopedia, IX, page 84.

20. Wheelman, I, 115.

21. Wheelman, I, page 116.



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From every direction came similar parties to Chicago on May 29th. About one hundred fifty wheelmen participated and the artist has successfully sketched some of the unhappy victims of misplaced confidence in Chicago streets. No Eastern men entered the contests, much to the disgust of the spectators.²² A feeling of chagrin seems to have seized most of the Eastern men because "Although thousands gathered to witness the novel spectacle, (parade) other thousands hardly knew there was a parade."²³ Alas for the men who 'never rode on sidewalks.' The grand parade started upon its route on the sidewalk, the street just there 'being out of condition'. There was no help for it, so it was done under the supervision of the police. After about one-half mile of sidewalk the line was launched upon 'broad Michigan Avenue, magnificiently paved (a different kind in each block), but good and favorable to wheelmen'.²⁴ The parade was made up of clubs from all of the principal cities of the country, 'the unattached bringing up the rear'. The proportion

22. Wheelman, I, page 117.

23. Wheelman, I, page 119.

24. Wheelman, I, page 119.

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of these later was less than in former years, showing that Clubs^{34.} attracted riders wherever numbers were sufficient to form them.^{35.} The roads particularly in "the Park" were pronounced superb - probably the finest many of the riders had ever seen.^{36.} Each Club could easily be distinguished by its particular uniform, and keen rivalry and interest seems to have centered around these uniforms.^{37.}

There was keen disappointment expressed over the attendance which was only four hundred people, one-half the attendance at the Boston Meet. The reasons assigned for this were several in number. Cities and towns in the West were widely separated, and railroad fares were great. Western men were busy making money, while the leisure class which had already made its money and which participated in bicycling was smaller in comparison with the same class in the East.^{38.}

The favorable influence of these great Meets upon the general public was unquestioned.^{39.} At each gathering observers were greatly surprised to see how large a proportion

25. Wheelman, I, Page 120.

26. Wheelman, I, page 121.

27. Ibid.

28. Wheelman, I, page 122.

29. Wheelman, I, page 125.

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of riders were mature men to whom "the games of youth" had no charm but who, none the less, were devoted to this latest form of recreation. ³⁰. The fourth annual meet at New York City was most successful in point of numbers, ³¹. while the fifth meet at Washington, D. C. numbered six hundred in the parade.³².

By 1887 the League of American Wheelman had reached its maximum in membership as may be seen from the following figures:

1886 - 10,264 members

1887 - 11,948 members

1888 - 11,948 members

1889 - 11,864 members.

New York state headed the list in 1888 in point of numbers, with a membership of 2,467. Pennsylvania came next with 1,476 members and Massachusetts followed with 1,236 devotees.³³.

An article in the New York Tribune, in commenting on the popularity of wheeling, stated that wheeling had reached the third stage in America, the three stages being classified as the

30. Wheelman, I, page 122.

31. Wheelman, II, page 427.

32. Outing and the Wheelman, IV, page 311.

33. Outing (New York, 1889), XIII, page 565.

riding-school, the club, and the touring stages.³⁴ Clubs were³⁶ very numerous and well scattered throughout the country, many, indeed, being large and commodious with beautiful grounds and surroundings.³⁵ The oldest and in some respects the typical bicycle club was established February 11, 1878, as the Boston Bicycle Club and, at that time, had fourteen members. Four years later its membership had reached one hundred twenty-five people.³⁶ The Massachusetts Club was extensive and complete, and even in winter, not content to let interest lag, utilized its facilities for various entertainments of athletic, literary, and musical nature. Regular ladies' receptions were held, as well as tournaments in the billiard hall and bowling alley. The outgrowth of these, perhaps was the Winter Carnival given December 16, 1883 at the Mechanics Fair Building, which consisted of as fine a cycling³⁷ entertainment as had ever been given.

The touring stage had its inception, perhaps in the journey of Thomas Stevens, who in 1884 rode a bicycle from San Francisco to Boston, a distance of three thousand miles.

34. Outing, VIII, page 217.

35. Outing, IX, page 390.

36. Wheelman, I, pages 401-402.

37. Outing, VII, pages 590-591.

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This was the most notable exploit from a long distance angle on record.³⁸ Shortly after this trip, he toured Europe on his bicycle. On both trips he wrote accounts of his journeys which appeared in the monthly issues of "Outing" and attracted considerable attention.³⁹

During the eighties bicycles and tricycles became popular for ladies and frequent press notices show that by 1886 they too had reached the touring stage.⁴⁰ "One of the encouraging signs of the past year", says Leslie's Weekly for October, 1889, "is the increasing use ladies are making of the safeties. Every city has its lady bicycle riders and, in some, large, flourishing clubs have been organized. During the present season a Massachusetts lady has ridden one hundred one miles in a day."⁴¹

Henry E. Ducker was a great power behind bicycling. Under the influence of the tournaments which he inaugurated, the interest of the whole world was quickened. Through the auspices of the Buffalo International Fair Association, the

38. Outing, VI, page 107.

39. Outing, VI, pages 41, 164, 290, 410; VII, pages 34, 182, 286, 379, 506, 655.

40. Outing, VII, page 343.

41. Leslie's Weekly, October 5, 1889, LXIX, page 157.

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first meet of which gathered in Buffalo, an event notable in the^{38.}
cycling world was made. Ten thousand wheelmen were present and
excitement ran high over the outcome of the international races.⁴²
In 1881 the Springfield Club of which Ducker was a moving spirit,
put through a one day tournament. Record breaking dated from
this event.^{43.} Two years later a three day tournament was held
again at Springfield. On the second day nearly everyone of the
thirty-three thousand inhabitants caught the infection. All the
banks and principal manufacturies, many stores and even the
public schools closed.^{44.} These tournaments of 1884 and 1885
were almost as popular as the preceding ones, but in 1886 the
non-appearance of English adversaries caused a drop in the
patronage. During Ducker's administration money expended in
tournaments and cycling exhibitions in Springfield exceeded
sixty thousand dollars. ^{45.}

42. Outing, XIII, page 32.

43. Outing, XIII, page 33.

44. Ibid.

45. Outing, XIII, page 35.

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The indoor type of race track was either of boards smoothly and closely fitted or of concrete with raised corners to prevent slipping in turning. Outdoor tracks were of three kinds: Well rolled grass, ordinary clay, or cinder tracks. The latter was the most popular.⁴⁶ By 1886 better race tracks were being agitated, an appeal being made to place them inside the trotting tracks.⁴⁷

The evolution of the modern bicycle is interesting. In 1878 the original Columbia Bicycle had cone-bearings, lock-nut and nipped spokes, solid forks, open head, rear wheel brake, and two steps, and weighed in the neighborhood of a 'pound to the inch'.⁴⁸ The next ten years saw the gradual simplification of the parts constituting a wheel and, in particular, the decrease in the weight of machines. By 1889 the high-wheeler had become standard and had reached a near state of perfection, weighing about five pounds less than the newly inaugurated safety, which was advertised as "light" but weighed fifty pounds. The safety type of bicycle was

46. Outing VII, page 97.

47. Annual Encyclopedia, IX, page 84. For more complete description, see above reference.

48. Columbia Bicycles, Pope Manufacturing Company (Boston, 1889), page 3.

introduced into America sometime between 1885 and 1890. The Pope Manufacturing Company list one in their catalogue for 1889, while the American Bicycle Company in their catalogue for 1889 state that their type of safety has been on the market for four years.⁴⁹ Certainly by 1889 the safety had become an assured type. It became almost immediately popular, indeed its popularity assumed almost the proportions of a craze.⁵⁰ This type, with its wheels of equal size and chain drive, was used where, perhaps, no other type would have been considered.⁵¹ The tandem increased in popularity from 1887 on, and by 1889 the tandem safety was catalogued and advertised by all the leading bicycle firms.⁵²

The bicycle had to fight its way into public favor in the United States. The prejudice of "old fogies" had to be lived down, and timid people and still more timid horses had to be educated as well.⁵³ Many legal fights were fought, and much money expended to secure for wheelmen the use and privileges of the road. The Pope Manufacturing Company spent over eight thousand dollars in the Central Park case in New York City alone.⁵⁴

49. American Cycles, Gormely, Jeffery Manufacturing Company, (Chicago, 1889), pages 18-19.

50. Athletic Sports in America, page 693.

51. Columbia Bicycle Company, 1889, page 4.

52. Columbia Bicycle Company, 1887, page 4; 1889.

53. Wheelman, I, page 184.

54. Pope, Bicycling Industry, II, page 551.

In spite of public disfavor, the bicycle did win the public, and no other public contests in this country were so extensively taken part in by gentlemen. The professional element was comparatively small and highly respectable.⁵⁵ At Agricultural fairs and other public assemblies throughout the country bicycle races became a regular part of the entertainment and were peculiarly popular among all classes.⁵⁶ The evolution of the racing wheel began in 1881 or 1882 and added improvements were made each year, because bicycle racing and tournaments became established features of all fall programs of sports throughout the country.⁵⁷ As a recreation in which all could participate alike with benefit, bicycling unquestionably stood alone.

55. Wheelman, I, page 26.

56. Wheelman, I, page 26.

57. Leslie's Weekly, October 5, 1889, LXXIX, page 157.

Cricket.

The importance of cricket in America in the eighties is a difficult thing to determine. Every newspaper and sporting periodical of the time devoted a good portion of its space to notices of cricket games, but the impression gained from the majorpart of this material is that the unusual element in the matches gained for them undue prominence, rather than the fact that readers eagerly sought the press for the outcome of a contest, as was the case with baseball. Probably every cricket match which was played in America was featured by the newspapers, whereas hundreds of baseball games were played every day, which were never even noted in the sporting columns of the papers.

Cricket in America, however, was a fact. Although it was not played generally, in one locality, Philadelphia, men, women, and children appreciated the game.³ No one who had ever mingled with the "cultured sons of Boston" or the "blue-blooded scions of Philadelphia" could for a moment doubt that cricket was not played but played at.⁴ This, the popular game of England, with the same ardent following there as baseball boasted of in the United States, did not bloom readily on American soil. The English visitor regretfully recounted that the game was generally voted slow in America. In the early

3. Outing, V, page 47.

4. New Book of Sports, page 271.

Chapter III.

Minor Participants Sports.

Croquet.

In 1879 the latest phase of the sporting fever found expression in a convention of croquet players.¹ In the preceding decade this game had become popular, largely due to the fact that it required very little skill to master the game, and could be played in anyone's front yard.. Not being of a strenuous nature this sport could be readily participated in by ladies, without any question of impropriety. Although warm weather and life in the country called this game to the front as late as 1889, this pastime had distinctly passed its meridian. No doubt croquet was a victim of "the survival of the fittest".²

1. Chicago Inter Ocean, September 24, 1879.

2. New York Tribune, June 16, 1889.

eighties cricket retained more followers than it was able to during the end of that decade, showing the poor hold the game had on the public at large. Philadelphia did play cricket with all its soul, but one is tempted to believe the comment of an English visitor when he says its popularity "springs from a burning desire to imitate England, which is one of the most salient American characteristics." In Boston a fairly good sort of game was played, but in New York a very limited amount was indulged in.⁵

The game was exported to America before 1747, but after a century of residence it had found little hold outside of New York, Boston, and Philadelphia save along the Canadian border where baseball was practically unknown.⁶

In 1878 an Australian team returning from a victorious trip to England played a match in New York with eighteen men against their opponents twenty-two. They also played a Philadelphia team.⁷ 1879 was notable for the visits to America of the most prominent English and Irish professional and amateur elevens. The Americans astounded the foreign teams by their excellent fielding and straight bowling.⁸

5. New Book of Sports, pages 271-272.

6. New Book of Sports, page 274.

7. New Book of Sports, page 274.

8. New Book of Sports, page 275.

Whereas few natives of the United States played cricket, the few who did, seem to have played unusually well. It was a close corporation, however, with a few families excelling and passing on the art from generation to generation.

The principal cricket clubs in America were the Young America, Germantown, and Merion of Philadelphia, the St. George, Staten Island, and Manhattan of New York and the Longwood of Boston.⁹ Some of these still exist today. Cricket in the United States is essentially a rich man's game attracting the fashionable element of society and hence, only reaching a favored few. These clubs fostered the aristocratic element, their membership being limited to a select few.

The first cricket manual ever attempted in America was published in 1890, and "it is for the clubs throughout the country to say whether or not it shall be made a success or not", said the introduction.¹⁰ The fact that cricket had been played in America for over a century and no manual made its appearance until 1890 surely is significant and shows as pointedly as anything could the place of cricket as a public amusement in America.

9. New Book of Sports, page 279.

10. The American Cricket Manual for 1890, compiled and edited by Jerome Flannery (New York, 1890), page 5.

Roller Skating.

As early as the eighteenth century wheeled skates came into use in Holland, but it was the invention of the four-wheeled skate, working on rubber springs, by Mr. Plimpton of New York in 1863 that made the amusement popular. Still greater advancement was made by the Raymond skate with ball and cone bearings. The rollers, which were first made of turned boxwood, were very rapidly on the edges. This difficulty was surmounted by making the rollers of either a hard composition or of steel.¹¹

Rinks and roller-skating became recognized as the means to a popular pastime, and the establishment of skating rinks in nearly every one of the principal cities of the country enabled young and old alike to indulge in this exercise under the guidance of competent instructors and regardless of the weather.¹² Indeed, after placing skates on wheels, skating became a perennial amusement.

The racket of the rollers never ceased. At the seaside in summer, at all the country resorts and at the various rinks in the winter, there were skaters everywhere. As with

11. Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th Edition, (Cambridge, 1910), XXIII, page 467.

12. Spalding's Manual of Roller Skating (Chicago and New York, 1884), page 7.

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bicycling, England set the fashion, but the sport was rather slow to domesticate itself in America.¹³ However, the "gospel of recreation" became more commonly understood, and the roller-skating craze in smaller towns soon became a proof of universal and heretofore unsatisfied longing for recreation. The rink met the want of a central place where everybody might meet on equal footing and give themselves up to enjoyment. "When the craze dies out it will leave this want behind, and the next thing will be to meet it more completely. The time is ripe for the making of the Casino an American institution."¹⁴ The rink, filling the need of a central meeting place at that period, may have found expression later in the Young Men's Christian Association Buildings and similar organizations among the women.

The professional element in roller-skating began to creep in about 1885. An outcry against this practice resulted, and a plea went out to return to the old basis, with rinks open to the public purely from the standpoint of enjoyment and pleasure. As a remedy private rinks, managed entirely in the

13. Wheelman, V, page 300.

14. Outing, VII, page 340.

interests of reputable, social recreation were urged to take the place of the public rinks of the past.¹⁵

The advertisements of roller skates in the magazines throw some light on ^{the} extent and popularity of the sport. During the latter part of 1884 and throughout the year 1885 skates were regularly advertised, while the following year the advertisements became less frequent, finally disappearing entirely.¹⁶

In 1884 the "Casino" Roller Skating Rink of Chicago was the largest, and best constructed rink in the country. This rink cost in excess of \$50,000 and seated three thousand spectators on the main floor and in the gallery and private boxes. The equipment of the building included fifteen hundred pair of roller skates for the patrons, who were instructed in the various figures by six instructors, two of whom were ladies. A band of music and a professional skater of no mean ability were among the attractions of the place.¹⁷

Because roller-skating was not a definitely organized recreation, the newspapers and periodicals of the time devote

15. Outing, VIII, page 99.

16. Leslie's Weekly, October, 1884 - December, 1885; Outing, VI, page 10.

17. Spalding's Manual of Roller Skating, pages 78-81.

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little or no space to its growth and popularity. Indirectly, ^{49.}
however, they do throw some light upon the subject. Exhibition
bicycle riding, annual meetings of baseball associations, in
fact, any gathering requiring a large hall or even floor space
met in the skating rink of the particular city or town in
question.

Lawn Tennis.

Lawn Tennis was introduced into America in 1874, but was looked upon chiefly as a curiosity, few indeed knowing what the game was called.¹⁸ Until 1880 all matches were private or open to club members only, but in that year tournaments were inaugurated. With the advent of the tournament, lawn tennis, which was gradually becoming popular, took a tremendous step forward.¹⁹ Previous to 1881 Newport's tournaments had not been open to the public, but in that year the first National tournament, with contests for singles, took place here, before a large number of spectators, from all parts of the country.²⁰

The United States Lawn Tennis Association was formed in January 1881 as the result of a call signed by Dr. Dwight and others. Twenty clubs responded and the attendance and enthusiasm was a surprise to all.²¹ The benefits of this organization were immediately felt. Tournaments increased in number until they became annual fixtures, eagerly waited for by all enthusiasts of the game.²²

18. R. D. Sears, Lawn Tennis in America, in The Badminton Library (London, 1890), page 315.

19. Sears, Lawn Tennis in America, pages 316-318.

20. New York World, September 1, 1881.

21. Athletic Sports in America, page 486.

22. Athletic Sports in America, page 486.

On August 29, 1889 the first professional match ever held in America took place at the Newport Casino between the professional court tennis champion of America, Thomas Pettit, and the British professional champion, George Kerr. The latter won.²³ The second contest of the series was played in Springfield, Massachusetts, and here the American bettered the British champion.²⁴ In the concluding match at the Longwood Club of Boston the professional championship of the world was decided in favor of Mr. Kerr.²⁵

Lawn Tennis became popular in the college and with the ladies as well. In 1889, N. S. Shaler in an article on the "Athletic Problem in Education" placed tennis first in the college among all other ball games in point of popularity.²⁶ Tennis is peculiarly adapted to ladies and this fact early became recognized by them. June 13, 1877 an archery and tennis contest for ladies was held in New York with great success, and from that time on they figure more prominently in all tournaments

23. Athletic Sports in America, page 498.

24. New York Herald, September 22, 1889.

25. New York Herald, October 3, 1889.

26. N. S. Shaler, Athletic Problem in Education, in the Atlantic Monthly, January, 1889.

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of any note. 27. Under the auspices of the Lawn Tennis Association in Philadelphia an annual tournament for the championship in ladies singles took place, while on the grounds of the Staten Island Cricket and Baseball Club contests in ladies singles were also annual affairs. 28.

A large number of tennis clubs sprang into existence, and here, perhaps, was formed the nucleus of the modern country club. In the large club of the eighties there were from five to twelve courts, a commodious club house, lockers, shower baths, every convenience necessary to the comfort of its members. Progressive tennis was introduced by the ladies ending with afternoon tea at the club-house.²⁹ In addition many of the great athletic clubs made tennis their prominent pastime. The Staten Island Cricket and Baseball Club was the most conspicuous example. Here men, women, and children played the game, and the club itself became one of the most prominent and enthusiastic members of the National Tennis Association.³⁰

27. New York Tribune, June 13, 1877.

28. Athletic Sports in America, pages 488-513.

29. Athletic Sports in America, page 489.

30. Athletic Sports in America, page 487.

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No game introduced into this country from England achieved such rapid favor in fashionable circles as lawn tennis. It easily became the pet game at all the watering places, and at every fashionable summer resort in the country. It was a game which required less physical strength than other sports, could be played on a small space of ground or floor, its materials were inexpensive, it could be made an all year game, and was excellent diversion for ladies.³¹ Scarcely a private place in the country was without its tennis set, all the large hotels at the summer resorts had two or three courts marked out, and every city and town had its tennis clubs. In one of the large parks in New York City there were over one hundred courts laid out at the same time.³²

Tennis was a summer game especially appealing to those fortunate enough to be able to enjoy the summer hotels and sea-side resorts. The cities, however, in their parks provided the necessary equipment for this popular sport, and many summer residents of the city were able to avail themselves of the opportunity to recreate in a game of tennis - a game which was rapidly gaining popularity in the United States.

31. Spalding's Lawn Tennis Manual (Chicago, 1887), pages 5-6.

32. New Book of Sports, page 331.

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Chapter IV.
Minor Spectator Sports.
Horse Racing.

In connection with a picture entitled, "Scenes at the Races" Leslie's Weekly for September 7, 1889 comments upon the fact that "many, perhaps the majority of people have never seen a horse race."¹ While this was undoubtedly true, still horse-racing had a large number of ardent followers, at certain seasons of the year rivaling in popularity the great National game of baseball. The appeal of the two, however, differed in extent as well as in kind. As has been stated previously every small boy in the United States became a baseball fan as early as he could hold a ball in his hand, whereas very few climbed trees in order to witness a horse race. Aside from the excitement of the race itself, the interest in the turf lay wholly in the gambling element which figured so prominently in every contest. Baseball, as has already been pointed out, early became free from any pool selling or gambling.² One other difference lies in the fact that a game of baseball could be played satisfactorily whenever two opposing nines could be secured, while a horse race must be staged, the stage setting usually being confined to the large cities where in the crowds, the gambling instinct ran high.

1. Leslie's Weekly, September 7, 1889.

2. Athletic Sports in America, page 23.

Horse racing was confined largely to two seasons of the year, May and June, September and October. During these two seasons any New York or Chicago daily paper invariably devoted far more space to the turf than to the popular game of baseball. Even in September, when the baseball season was drawing rapidly to a close and excitement ran high as to the outcome of the League and Association championships, horse racing equalled and often out-stripped its rival in the columns assigned it by the press. 3.

The principal interest of New York in horse racing centered around the spring and fall contests at Jerome Park, and steeple-chasing and flat racing at Newport, the best racing course in America.⁴ At the former course the American Jockey Club, one of the most formidable organizations in the country, contested semi-annually, drawing out large crowds in good weather, and even fair patronage on threatening days.⁵

3. Chicago Inter Ocean, September 15, 1879; New York Tribune, September 18, 1884; New York World, September 10, 1888.

4. New York Tribune, June 7, 1889, New York Herald, September 1, 1877, New York Herald, September 9, 1877.

5. New York Tribune, June 7, 1889.

New York boasted of her Saratoga, Long Branch and Charter Oak Park races as well, and every large city had a proportionate share of exciting contests.⁶ When the season was late and New York's "four hundred" lingered at Newport, their absence was decidedly felt at Jerome Park. Some might readily have interpreted this falling off in attendance to mean that racing was not as popular as formerly, but with rich patrons still at the seashore, attendance inevitably suffered.⁷

Every city had its riding club, but in 1889 New York City claimed to possess one of the largest in the United States. The ring was eighty-five by one hundred seventy-five feet, and the stables accommodated two hundred horses. Wives, minor sons, unmarried daughters and sisters of members were all entitled to membership.⁸

In 1883 Secretary Vail of the National Trotting Association published the first Turfmen's Directory. His book was similar in character to Spalding's Baseball Guide, containing all information of interest and instruction to the horse racing enthusiast. Every member of the Association received one free; others could obtain them at a nominal sum from the publisher.⁹

6. New York Herald, September 1, 1877; Chicago Tribune, September 7, 1878.

7. New York Herald, September 30, 1877.

8. New York Tribune, June 2, 1889.

9. Chicago Tribune, May 14, 1883.

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Yachting.

Yachting, necessarily, was limited in its scope. Aside from the eastern coast of the United States very little interest was evidenced, with the exception of Chicago, and even here the interest was not foremost. Yachting like horse racing was confined to certain seasons of the year and appealed largely to the wealthy.¹⁰ This water sport could not be witnessed by large numbers of people, and hence interest in it did not extend to as many people as was the case in bicycling or baseball.

Hundreds of Yacht Clubs were organized in and around New York City and contests between them were numerous.¹¹ Chicago, also, had its regattas and racing contests, but they did not attract the attention of the press to the same extent that similar contests in New York did.¹²

One phase of yacht racing which appealed even to the "farmer in the western prairie, who had never seen salt water", as well as to interested dwellers on the Atlantic coast, was the international races conducted for the "hundred guinea cup".¹³ During the great London Exhibition in 1851 a "Yankee schooner" called America arrived in Cowes, England from New York, under

10. New Book of Sports, page 259.

11. Any New York paper for the summer months.

12. Chicago Tribune, Sept. 3-7, 1878.

13. New York Tribune, September 7, 1886.

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the command of John Stevens. One of her owners expressed a desire to race her against the fleetest of the Royal Yacht Squadron. On August 23, 1851 in the annual regatta of the Royal Thames Yacht Club, open to yachts from all nations, "America" with seventeen others contested and won.¹⁴ The cup won at this race, and which England sought to bring back, was retained in six races resulting favorably for the United States contestants. These contests took place on August 8, 1870, October 21 and 23, 1871, August 11th and 13th, 1876, November 9th and 10th, 1881, and September 9th and 11th, 1886 and September 1, 1887.¹⁵ To accommodate the spectators large ocean steamers accompanied the yachts over their entire course.¹⁶

The cup won by Stevens in 1851 was subsequently offered by its owners to the New York Yacht Club subject to certain conditions. This agreement became unsatisfactory, and at a meeting of the New York Club in 1888 a new deed was made allowing any mutual agreement between the challenger and the challenged. After 1887 match races were restricted to two yachts, the challenger and the challenged. The interest in the cup was great. During the contests betting ran high, in 1886 the odds being ten to seven and one-half in favor of the

14. New York Tribune, September 12, 1886.

15. New York Tribune, Sept. 5, 1886; New York Life Insurance pamphlet, 1889.

16. New York Tribune, September 11, 1886.

"Mayflower". Hundreds of thousands of dollars were spent to secure and retain the cup.¹⁷.

Rifle Contests.

While rifle contests were held throughout the country frequently during the eighties, the Creedmoor Rifle Range, the property of the National Riflemen Association, was the scene for the only contests in America which aroused far-reaching interest. The National Association of Riflemen was already organized in 1876 and was holding semi-annual meetings to arrange for contests at Creedmoor and to conduct any business necessary to the maintenance of the organization. At the board of directors meeting in 1876 it was resolved that any club paying twenty-five dollars and filing their by-laws with the National Association might become members of the same, provided that only ten members should be entitled to the privilege of annual members at the spring and fall meetings. The names and addresses of the officers of each club and the scores of the same, it was provided, should be properly certified and printed in every annual report. One delegate from every fifty members might attend the May convention and receive the bronze medal of the Association.¹⁸.

17. New York Tribune, September 7, 1886; New York Life Insurance pamphlet, 1889.

18. New York World, February 2, 1876.

By 1876 the Creedmoor Range had become a field of international sport. In the contests of ~~that~~ year between the Irish, Scotch, Canadian, Australian, and American riflemen, fully sixteen thousand people were spectators, the greater portion of them being from New York City. While these numbers were disappointing to the management, they indicated a lively interest on the part of one locality. While the actual spectators were confined largely to one locality, interest in the outcome of the contests was intense in the West as well, if the newspapers are to be trusted.¹⁹ America, at the end of three days contest was declared victor.

Besides the international contests at Creedmoor, the National Association of Riflemen met annually on these grounds in contests which aroused great interest among shooting circles.²⁰ These contests were also supplemented by interstate contests, events which raised the standard of rifle shooting surprisingly within a very few years.²¹

In 1875, while visiting in England, the National Riflemen's Association of America was presented with the

19. New York Tribune, September 13, 14 and 15, 1876; Chicago Tribune, September 13, 14 and 15, 1876.

20. New York Tribune, September 18, 1886.

21. New York Herald, September 12, 1877.

Wimbledon or "American Challenge" cup by the National Rifleman's Association of Great Britain.²² The following year the Centennial cup, as it was called, became the object of the international contest of 1876, and the outcome of the meet attracted considerable attention in rifle circles.

In 1889 the state of New York purchased the National Rifle Association grounds at Creedmoor for a state shooting ground. The contests of former year, international and local, continued to be held upon the same grounds.²⁴ Occasionally United States teams visited Great Britain and contested with teams there. One of these occasions took place when the Massachusetts Rifle team went to England to compete in June, 1889.²⁵

Boxing.

About the beginning of the nineteenth century boxing began to be popular in the United States, the first recognized National champion being Tom Myer, who held that distinction from 1841 to 1848.²⁶ John L. Sullivan first became widely known by defeating "Paddy" Ryan at Mississippi City, February

22. New York Tribune, September 23, 1876.

23. New York Tribune, June 25, 1877.

24. New York Tribune, June 21, 1889.

25. New York Tribune, June 18, 1889.

26. Encyclopedia Britannica, XXII, page 639.

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7, 1882, whereby he won five thousand dollars and became heavy-weight champion of America.²⁷ Sullivan was a Boston man of Irish parentage, and during the eighties engaged in many bouts, the most prominent being a draw after thirty-nine rounds, with Mitchell in 1888 near Paris, France.²⁸ In September 1883, Sullivan made a tour of the United States, meeting over fifty men and easily defeating them all.²⁹ As a token of their esteem, his admiring friends in Boston presented Sullivan with a ten thousand dollar gold belt in 1887.³⁰

The most noteworthy event in the career of Jake Kilrain, a citizen of Baltimore, previous to 1889, had been an engagement with "Jem" Smith, the English champion in France in 1887. After one hundred six rounds the fight was called on account of darkness.³¹ When Sullivan broke his arm on Patsy Cardiff's head, Kilrain challenged him. Sullivan accepted the challenge, but being unable to get into condition, the title with the Police Gazette belt went to Kilrain by default.³²

27. Nelson's Encyclopaedia, New York World, July 8, 1889.

28. Madison Democrat, March 11, 1888.

29. New York World, July 8, 1889.

30. Avalanche, September 3, 1887; New York World, July 8, 1889.

31. New York Herald, July 9, 1889.

32. New York Herald, July 9, 1889.

On January 7, 1889, "Jake" Kilrain and John L. Sullivan signed an agreement to fight for the sum of ten thousand dollars a side and the Police Gazette belt, representing the championship of the world. The fight was arranged for July 8, 1889, to take place between eight and ten A. M. within two hundred miles of New Orleans.³³ Although a rather weak attempt was made to stop the fight by Governor Lowry of Mississippi, the question of pugilistic championship was decided at Richburg, Mississippi, on the day previously arranged, Sullivan being victorious after seventy-five rounds.³⁴ No previous contest had ever created such widespread interest. Many of the leading papers sent special reporters, while the New York World sent two men, who were first on the scene of battle.³⁵

Rarely since the "days of the war" had the people of New York City been so absorbed in any one event as in this great prize-fight. Its interest was intense and universal, extraordinary and unprecedented. "Nothing else was talked about, nothing else was thought about".³⁶ Before some of the newspaper offices special preparation was made to bulletin the reports of the progress of the fight and here several thousands

33. New York World, July 8, 1889.

34. New York Tribune, July 4 and 9, 1889.

35. New York World, July 9, 1889.

36. New York World, July 9, 1889.

of New York's population stood most of the day, eagerly awaiting the outcome of the contest.³⁷

The majority of the newspapers, on their front page and in their editorial columns, assumed the righteous attitude on the immorality and impropriety of the fight, but proceeded to fill their pages with every detail of the fight, long articles on the heroes concerned and every available scrap of information concerning the contest that could possibly interest the public.³⁸ Strong impressions of disgust over the fight continued to appear in the press coupled with lamentations over the keen interest displayed by the coarse and uneducated vicious class "fed by secret rills which flow from higher sources." The boys and men who hung about the telegraph offices for news of the big fight had less shame and, perhaps, less to do than some of their neighbors, but they were not alone in their eagerness to know how the affair ended nor in their expressions of satisfaction or the reverse over the result.³⁹ The truth was that a strong public sentiment theoretically opposed a prize-fight, but this sentiment diminished in intensity very fast as the hour for an important fight approached. Tens of thousands of law abiding

37. New York Tribune, July 9, 1889.

38. New York Tribune, July 9, 1889; Chicago Tribune, July 9, 1889.

39. Nation, February, 1882.

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citizens, who would have voted against prize-fighting as often^{65.} as they got a chance, would read the details of the latest encounter before they ate their breakfasts in the morning.^{40.} "It has been proved" says Harper's Weekly for August 1889, "that the question of the Behring Sea, of the rules of the house, of prohibition, of a Congressional election law of the Canadian fisheries, are totally unimportant to the multitudes that hang upon the bulletin boards, compared with that of the ability of Sullivan to mash Kilrain to a jelly before Kilrain could mash Sullivan." ^{41.}

Roosevelt was among the respectable citizens Sullivan numbered as his friends. "In his prime no better man (than Sullivan) ever stepped in the ring", said Roosevelt in his Autobiography. Roosevelt never sympathized with the outcry against prize-fighting, his only objection being the crookedness attending its commercial development.^{42.} Sullivan, no doubt, occupied a unique position in the history of pugilism in America. Fiercely condemned, he yet in a remarkable degree was a popular idol and subject to unbounded interest and adulation wherever he went. He was a spendthrift with a profound con-

40. New York Tribune, July 9, 1889.

41. Harper's Weekly, August 17, 1889.

42. Theodore Roosevelt, Autobiography (New York, 1913), pages 48-51.

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tempt for all conventionalities and a "most intense liking for straight whiskey", but he was undoubtedly one of the most interesting athletes of the period.

43. Chicago Times, July 8, 1889.

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